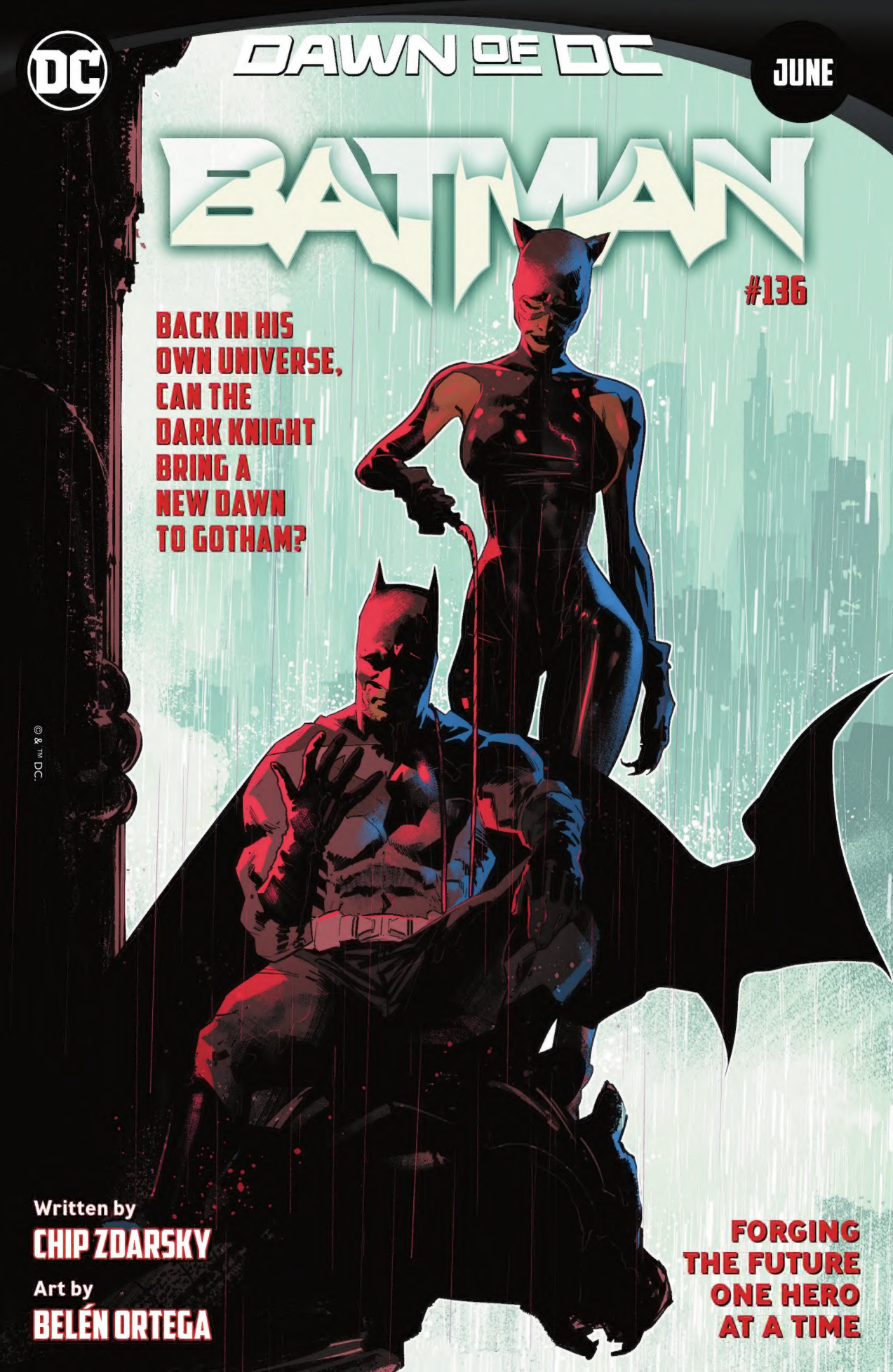
DC
1
ONE-SHOT
WILLIAMS
SAUVAGE
LOUISE
POWER GIRL
SPECIAL
TRAPPED BY
JOHNNY
SORROW
13+
TEEN
ALSO FEATURING
FIRE & ICE
STARER - BUSTOS - BONVILLAIN


DC
DAWN OF DC
JUNE
BATMAN
#136
BACK IN HIS OWN UNIVERSE, CAN THE DARK KNIGHT BRING A NEW DAWN TO GOTHAM?
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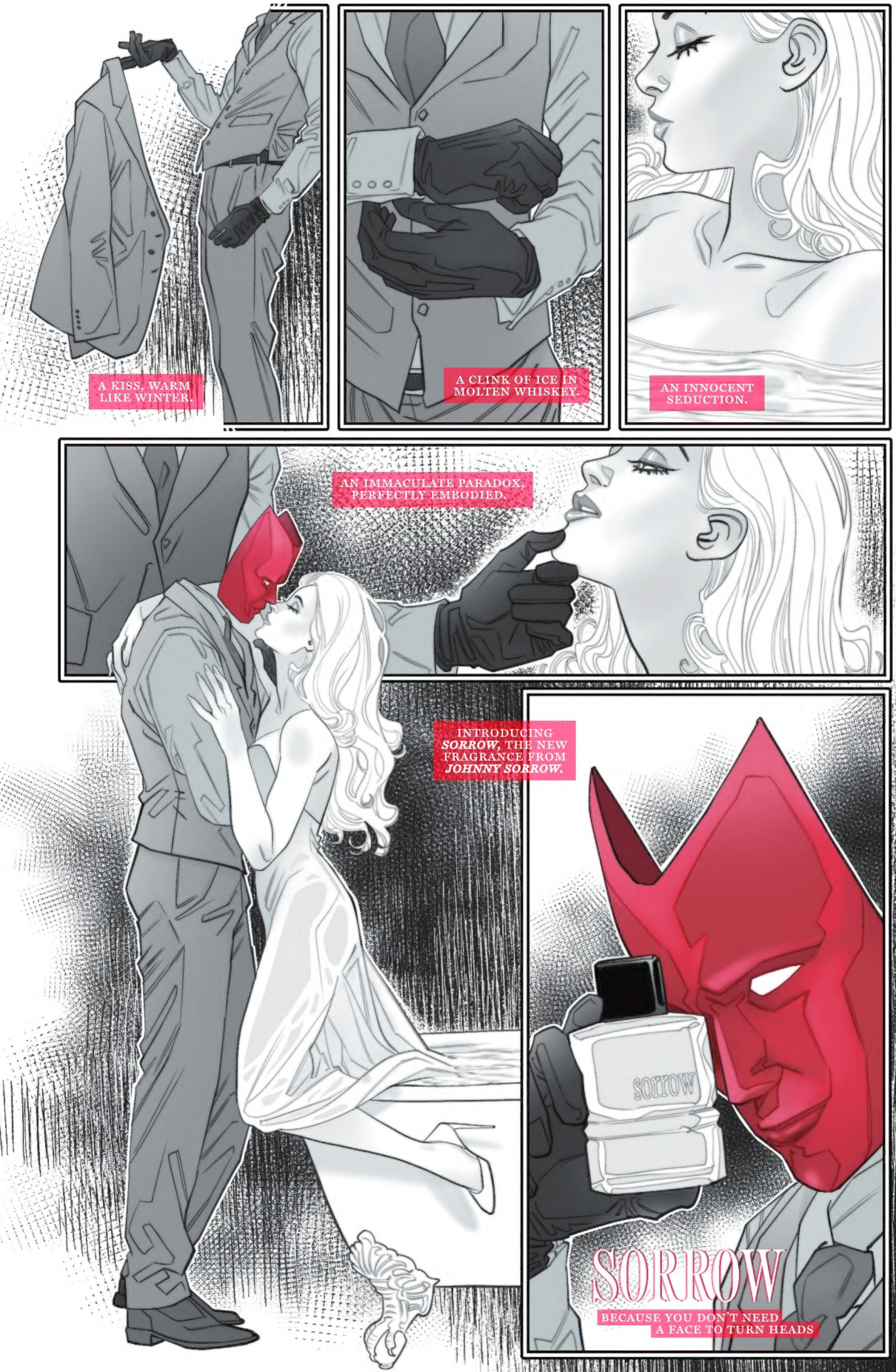
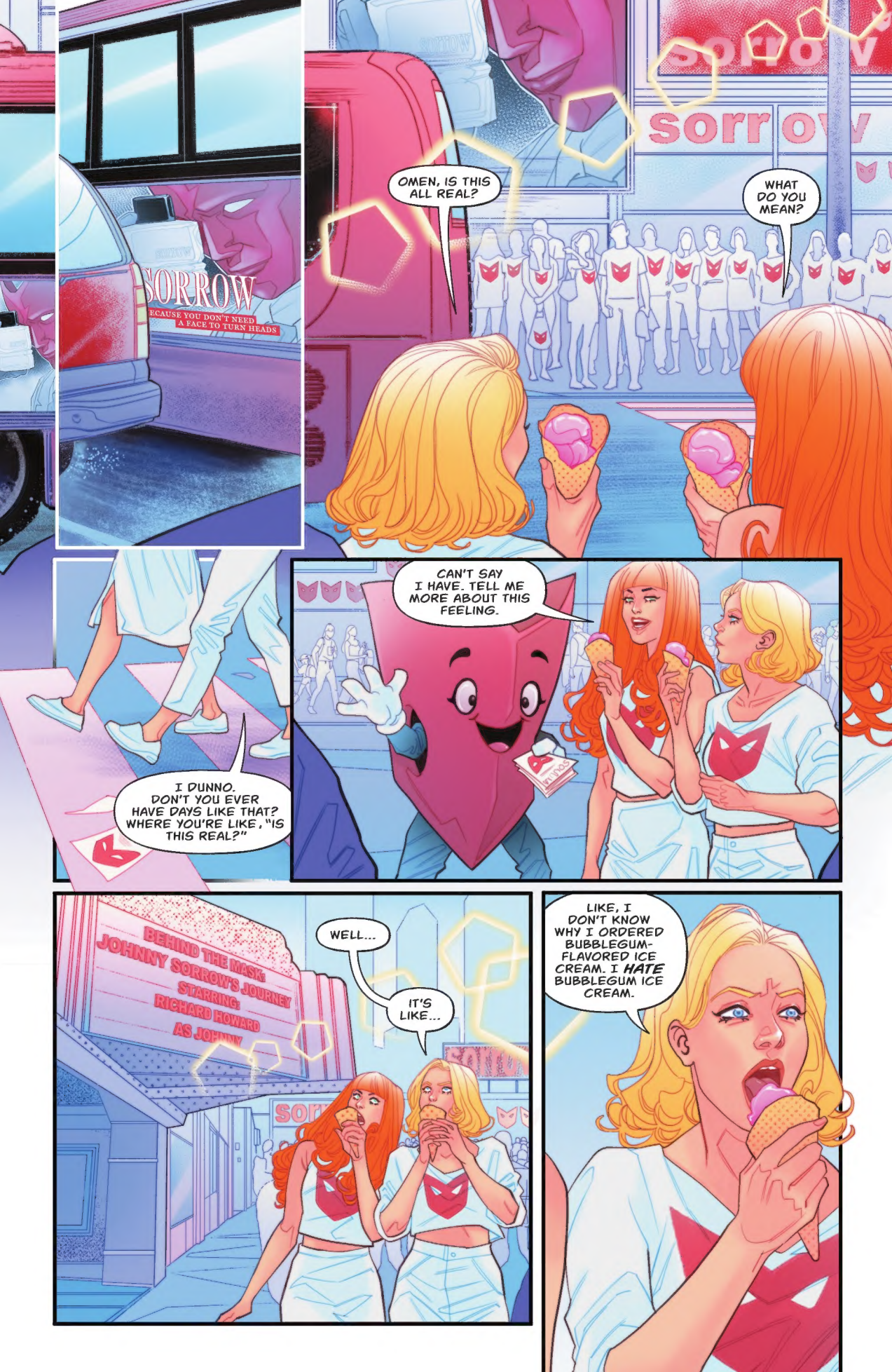
Written by
CHIP ZDARSKY
Art by
BELÉN ORTEGA
FORGING THE FUTURE ONE HERO AT A TIME


A KISS, WARM LIKE WINTER.
A CLINK OF ICE IN MOLTEN WHISKEY.
AN INNOCENT SEDUCTION.
AN IMMACULATE PARADOX, PERFECTLY EMBODIED.
INTRODUCING ***SORROW,*** THE NEW FRAGRANCE FROM ***JOHNNY SORROW.***
SORROW
SORROW
BECAUSE YOU DON'T NEED A FACE TO TURN HEADS


SORROW
BECAUSE YOU DON'T NEED A FACE TO TURN HEADS
OMEN, IS THIS ALL REAL?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
CAN'T SAY I HAVE. TELL ME MORE ABOUT THIS FEELING.
I DUNNO. DON'T YOU EVER HAVE DAYS LIKE THAT? WHERE YOU'RE LIKE, "IS THIS REAL?"
BEHIND THE MASK: JOHNNY SORROW'S JOURNEY STARRING: RICHARD HOWARD AS JOHNNY
WELL...
IT'S LIKE...
LIKE, I DON'T KNOW WHY I ORDERED BUBBLEGUM-FLAVORED ICE CREAM. I *HATE* BUBBLEGUM ICE CREAM.

MAYBE YOU WERE TESTING YOURSELF, DISCOVERING IF YOUR HATRED WAS STILL INTACT.
YEAH... MAYBE...
Sorrow-No-More
The New Reality Show
featuring Johnny Sorrow!
Tuesdays at 10pm EST, only on
JSC America's one and only choice for
Johnny's Broadcasting Company
PAIGE? WHAT IS IT?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
SPLAT
I AM SO SORRY, BUT I HAVE TO SNAP YOU OUT OF THIS.
SNAP ME OUT OF--
POW!
I'VE RECENTLY LEARNED FIRSTHAND HOW BEING PSYCHIC YIELDS ITS OWN SPECIAL TASTE OF CHAOS.

AND HOW BEING A ROOKIE PSYCHIC MAKES THAT CHAOS EVEN MORE BEWILDERING.
?!
GASP!
CLAP CLAP CLAP...
BRAVO. I WAS SO CERTAIN THAT WOULD ENTANGLE YOU TWO FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER HOUR.
...CLAP
JON? JON!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO HIM?!
THE SAME THING I'VE DONE TO EVERY OTHER METROPOLIS CITIZEN--GIFTED THEM INCLUSION INTO THE SHARED PSYCHIC VISION YOU TWO JUST UNWISELY OUSTED YOURSELVES FROM.
THE LAZARUS RAINS CHANGED ME.
IN A SINGLE INSTANT I WAS INUNDATED WITH AN UNHOLY DELUGE OF ASTRAL DATA--A PSYCHIC STREAM OF INFORMATION THAT NEVER CEASES, THAT I NEVER ASKED FOR, AND WHICH I HAVE YET TO MASTER.
WHAM
LUCKILY, I HAVE OTHER TALENTS TO FALL BACK ON.

LET ME GIVE YOU A SYNOPSIS OF WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN HERE, SWEET GIRL.
YOU WILL NOT PHYSICALLY HARM ME. YOU *CANNOT.*
SWOOF
YOU WILL, HOWEVER, CONTINUE TRYING FOR A TIME.
SHAZZZK
AND IN THIS PRECIOUS TIME OF ENERGY MISSPENT, MY *HORSEMEN* HAVE NOW BEEN DISPATCHED FROM THE *SUBTLE REALMS.*

GOTHAM.

"ONE PLAYER TO *EXCITE.*

WHUP-SHH

CRAK

The Pit

GREAT DISMAL SWAMP, NORTH CAROLINA.

The Pendulum

"ANOTHER TO *FRIGHTEN.*

AHHHHHHH!

AHHHHHHH!

AAAAAA!

LOS ANGELES.

"A THIRD PLAYER TO *ENTICE.*

The Poet

The Piper

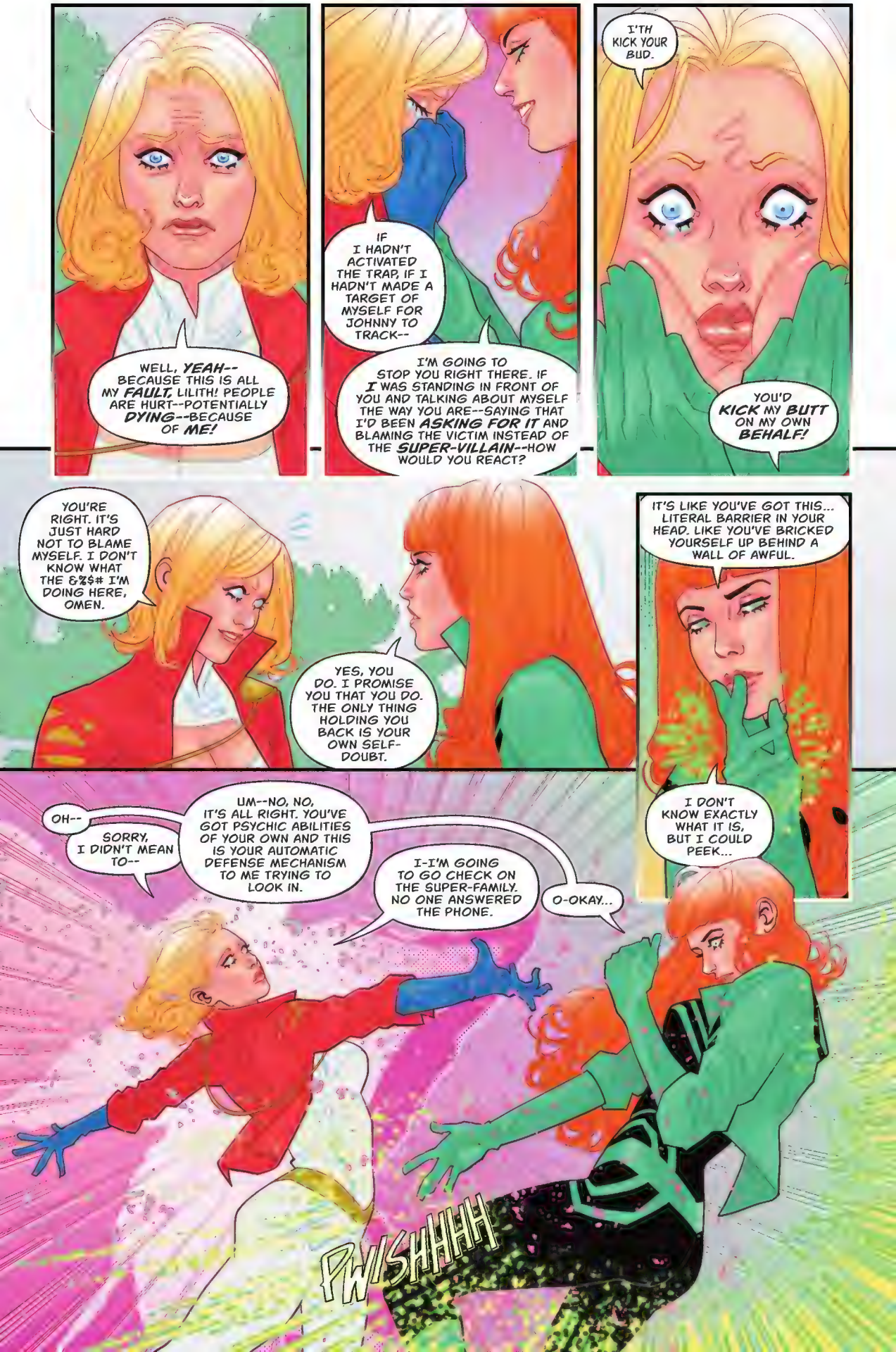
SEATTLE.

"ONE LAST DANCE TO *ENLIVEN.*"

SO, WHAT DO YOU SAY-- ANY CLIMACTIC LAST WORDS, MY DARLING COSTAR?
YEAH.
EAT %$#@.
WHAT SHE SAID.
AAUGHHH!

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!
METROPOLIS IS MERELY MY DRESS REHEARSAL. AS THE SHARED PSYCHIC DELUSION SPREADS FROM ONE CITIZEN TO THE NEXT, THUS INCREASES MY THRALL'S STRENGTH OVER PEOPLE.
ALL THE WHILE, MY HORSEMEN HAVE BEGUN THEIR NATIONAL TOUR AROUND THE COUNTRY...ONCE YOUR NATION IS SUBDUED, WE BEGIN OUR WORLD TOUR.
PAIGE-- LOOK.
NO... THAT...THIS CAN'T BE REAL...
UNFORTUNATELY, IT IS.
JOHNNY SORROW'S ACTIVATED HELL ON EARTH, COURTESY OF THE SUBTLE REALMS.
AND NONE OF THEM ARE CAPABLE OF FIGHTING BACK.

X-RAY VISION SHOWS INTERNAL ORGAN DAMAGE, BROKEN BONES, SHAKY VITALS...
PEOPLE DROPPED UNCONSCIOUS IN THE MIDDLE OF WHATEVER THEY WERE DOING AS JOHNNY'S THRALL TOOK OVER.
THIS WILL BECOME VERY DIRE, VERY FAST.
YEAH. I'M CALLING THE SUPER-FAMILY. SUPERMAN WILL KNOW WHAT TO DO.
BRRRRRING BRRRTTTING!
WE'RE SORRY. BUT WE'RE NOT AVAILABLE TO COME TO THE PHONE RIGHT NOW. PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE AFTER--
@$#%...
I CAN'T TELEPATHICALLY WAKE JON UP--IT'S LIKE HE'S GONE. LIKE HIS CONSCIOUSNESS HAS BEEN REMOVED TO SOMEWHERE ELSE ENTIRELY.
TAP
OKAY, SO, THEN I JUST ASTRAL-PUNCH MY WAY INTO THE PSYCHIC PLANE AND FIND THAT ELSEWHERE.
FOR EVERYONE'S ELSEWHERE? BECAUSE I CAN'T TELEPATHICALLY PICK UP ON A SINGLE OTHER PERSON'S CONSCIOUS MIND OUT THERE EXCEPT FOR YOURS.
OUTSIDE THE STATE, THEN. WE CALL THE TITANS FOR HELP.
I THINK THEY MAY HAVE PROBLEMS OF THEIR OWN DEALING WITH JOHNNY'S HORSEMEN.
OKAY, THEN, WELL, WHAT THE %$#@ DO YOU SUGGEST?!
I'M SORRY.
IT'S OKAY. I KNOW YOU'RE FRUSTRATED.


WELL, YEAH-- BECAUSE THIS IS ALL MY FAULT, LILITH! PEOPLE ARE HURT--POTENTIALLY DYING--BECAUSE OF ME!
IF I HADN'T ACTIVATED THE TRAP, IF I HADN'T MADE A TARGET OF MYSELF FOR JOHNNY TO TRACK--
I'M GOING TO STOP YOU RIGHT THERE. IF I WAS STANDING IN FRONT OF YOU AND TALKING ABOUT MYSELF THE WAY YOU ARE--SAYING THAT I'D BEEN ASKING FOR IT AND BLAMING THE VICTIM INSTEAD OF THE SUPER-VILLAIN--HOW WOULD YOU REACT?
I'TH KICK YOUR BUD.
YOU'D KICK MY BUTT ON MY OWN BEHALF!
YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'S JUST HARD NOT TO BLAME MYSELF. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE &%$# I'M DOING HERE, OMEN.
YES, YOU DO. I PROMISE YOU THAT YOU DO. THE ONLY THING HOLDING YOU BACK IS YOUR OWN SELF-DOUBT.
IT'S LIKE YOU'VE GOT THIS... LITERAL BARRIER IN YOUR HEAD. LIKE YOU'VE BRICKED YOURSELF UP BEHIND A WALL OF AWFUL.
I DON'T KNOW EXACTLY WHAT IT IS, BUT I COULD PEEK...
O-OKAY...
I-I'M GOING TO GO CHECK ON THE SUPER-FAMILY. NO ONE ANSWERED THE PHONE.
UM--NO, NO, IT'S ALL RIGHT. YOU'VE GOT PSYCHIC ABILITIES OF YOUR OWN AND THIS IS YOUR AUTOMATIC DEFENSE MECHANISM TO ME TRYING TO LOOK IN.
OH--
SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO--
PWISHHHH

OMEN MEANS WELL.
AND INTELLECTUALLY, I KNOW SHE'S RIGHT-- I SHOULDN'T BLAME MYSELF FOR WHAT'S HAPPENING.
BUT DEEP DOWN, AN UGLY PART OF ME IS WONDERING IF SHE KNOWS WHAT IT IS TO FEEL LIKE YOUR BODY HAS NEVER ONCE BELONGED TO YOU.
I WAS RAISED BY A SPACESHIP'S A.I. ALL MY MEMORIES ARE NICE LIES, FALSE PRETTY THINGS IMPLANTED BY MY ARTIFICIAL NURSEMAID AS WE DRIFTED ALONE IN SPACE.
BUT DO YOU KNOW THE ONE THING A SPACESHIP CAN'T POSSIBLY PREPARE YOU FOR?
THE MOMENT YOU SET FOOT WITHIN HUMAN SPACES AS A FULLY GROWN WOMAN FOR THE FIRST TIME, WHERE YOUR BODY WILL BE TREATED LIKE AN OPEN INVITATION. LIKE A QUESTION YOU NEVER MEANT TO ASK.
YOU DON'T EVEN UNDERSTAND AT FIRST, BUT AN UNSPOKEN QUESTION STRANGERS ARE ALL TOO EAGER TO ANSWER WITH THEIR STINGING WORDS AND THEIR HUNGRY EYES AND THEIR IMPATIENT HANDS
HELLO?
KR-KREEEAK
WHAT WAS THAT?
OF COURSE THIS IS ALL MY FAULT.
BECAUSE IF I NEVER EXISTED, NONE OF THIS WOULD BE HAPPENING.

"BUT PROFESSOR SADNESS, YOU HAVE TO ENTER THE TEMPLE!
"IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO FIND AND RETURN MY PEOPLE'S SACRED RELICS!"
I LOVE THIS PART.
ME TOO.
NOW COME ON, YOU TWO.
YOU HAVE TO HAVE WATCHED THAT MOVIE A HUNDRED TIMES BY NOW!
NOOOOO--
NO!
A'HUNDRED AND FOUR.
KNOCK KNOCK
KNOCK KNOCK
WHAT IS THIS SHOW?
<DO YOU GUYS HEAR THAT?>*
WE'VE MISSED THE FIRST EPISODE.
SHHH, I CAN'T HEAR THE TV!
*TRANSLATED FROM MANDARIN.
HEAR WHAT, KENAN?

KNOCKKNOCK
KNOCKKNOCK
KNO KNOCK
LOIS! CONNER! ANYBODY!

I DON'T HAVE THE BEST RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SUPER FAMILY
:SIGH:

I'M LIKE THEM IN THAT I'M KRYPTONIAN, BUT I'M NOT ONE OF THEM. NOT REALLY.

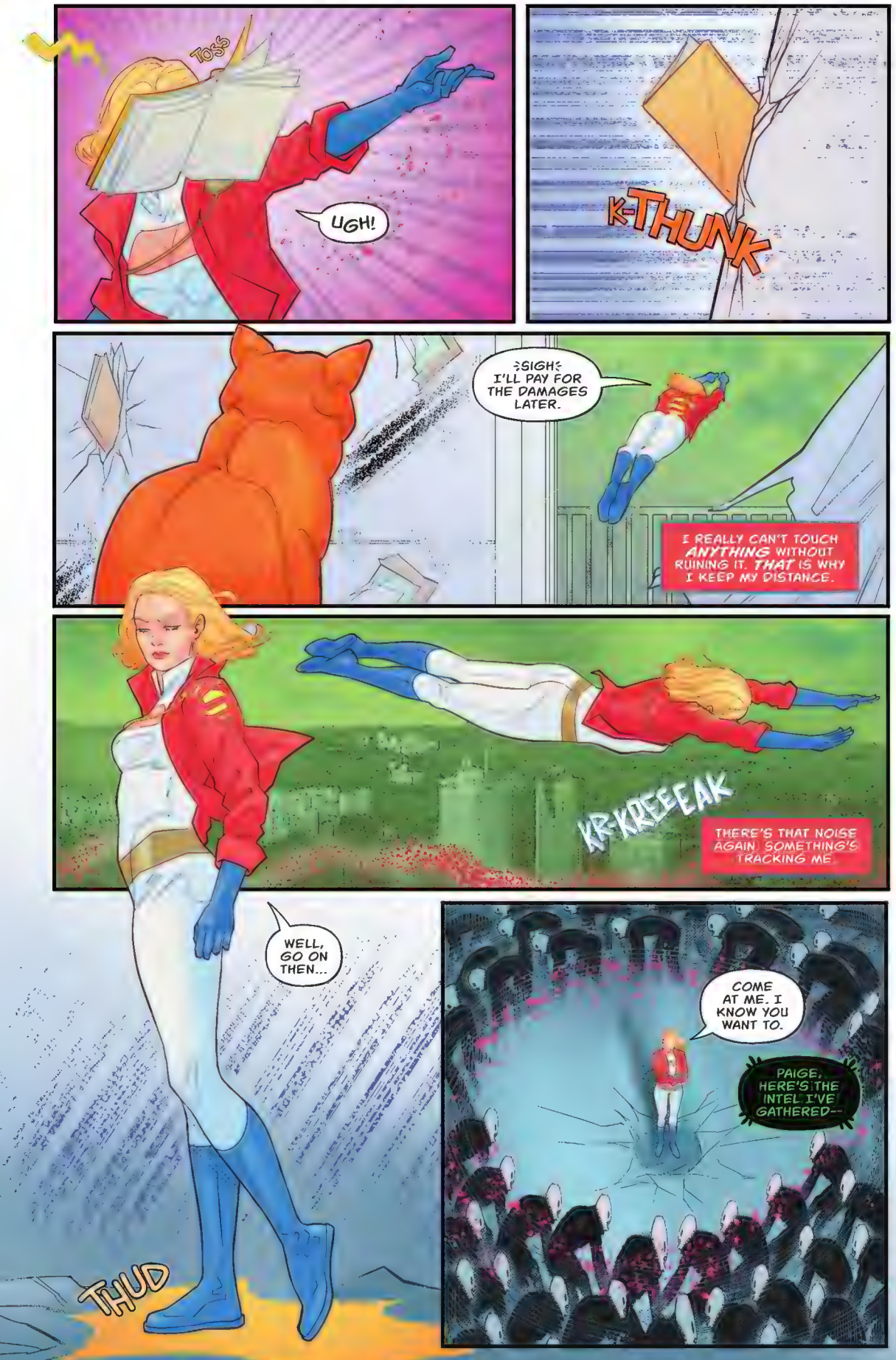
WHAM

THEY DON'T CARE FOR ME, AND I GUESS I RETURN THE SENTIMENT. I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO HAVE A REAL FAMILY ANYMORE. I'D PROBABLY JUST MESS IT UP.
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO LET PEOPLE IN, BUT IT'S BETTER FOR ME TO KEEP MY DISTANCE ANYWAY, BECAUSE I'M INEVITABLY JUST GOING TO BE A DISAPPOINTMENT TO WHOEVER LOOKS CLOSELY.
HELLO?

NO!
I'M TOO LATE
I FAILED THEM.
I SUPPOSE THE LEAST I CAN DO NOW IS MAKE THEM COMFORTABLE
ESPECIALLY SINCE I BROKE IN
AND DESTROYED THEIR FRONT DOOR
CONNER, YOU WON'T MIND IF I BORROW YOUR PHONE FOR A MOMENT, RIGHT?
I NEED KARA'S ADDRESS.

BAM
NOT EVEN GOING TO BOTHER KNOCKING FIRST THIS TIME.
DOES KARA HAVE A CAT? I DON'T SEE ANY--
HSST!
AAGH!
CRASH
BAM
PLEASE DON'T BE DEAD.
PLEASE, *PLEASE* DON'T TELL ME THAT I JUST MURDERED KARA'S CAT.
SHE HAS ENOUGH REASONS TO HATE ME AS IT IS...
CHHHZZT
ARGH!

HSSST!
YEAH, RIGHT BACK ATCHA. NOW YOU LISTEN TO ME, RINGWORM--I'M NOT SWEET LIKE KARA. AS YOU MAY HAVE GATHERED, I CAN AND WILL PUNCH A CAT IN THE FACE. SO JUST LET ME CHECK UP ON HER LIKE I'M HERE TO DO AND THEN I'LL BE ON MY MERRY WAY. DO WE HAVE AN UNDER-STANDING?
MROW...
:GROWL...:
IS THERE A SLUR FOR CATS? THERE SHOULD BE.
WAIT--WAS SHE WRITING ME A MESSAGE BEFORE THE PSYCHIC THRALL TOOK HER?!
Power Girl is a lesser version of me--that's how she---
NOPE. THAT'S HER DIARY. I SHOULDN'T.
FWOOSH
Power Girl is a lesser version of me--that's how she sees herself. But I have never once thought that about her.
I view her as an extension of my soul. I think we share a bond that no one else in this world could possibly conceive of, and I wish she saw it that way too.
I am not her adversary, nor her competition. We are something beyond family, and we should be close. But instead we're like opposite ends of a magnet, the same material repelling each other. I wish she would stop pushing me away. I wish she would stop pushing us all away.


TOSS
UGH!
K-THUNK
:SIGH: I'LL PAY FOR THE DAMAGES LATER.
I REALLY CAN'T TOUCH ANYTHING WITHOUT RUINING IT. THAT IS WHY I KEEP MY DISTANCE.
KR-KREEEAK
THERE'S THAT NOISE AGAIN. SOMETHING'S TRACKING ME.
WELL, GO ON THEN...
THUD
COME AT ME. I KNOW YOU WANT TO.
PAIGE, HERE'S THE INTEL I'VE GATHERED--

THE PIPER IS WORKING HER WAY EAST, STRAIGHT TOWARD METROPOLIS. HER SONG SENDS ALL WHO HEAR IT INTO A MANIC FRENZY OF DANCE, AND THEY'RE COMPELLED TO CONTINUE UNTIL THEY...PHYSICALLY CAN'T.
THOK
EITHER THE PIT OR THE PENDULUM LANDED IN GOTHAM JUDGING BY INITIAL S.O.S. SIGNALS. BUT THERE'S BEEN NOTHING SINCE, BECAUSE NOW THERE'S A COMPLETE MEDIA BLACKOUT. IT'S GONE DARK.
AS HAS THE SOUTH--NO IDEA WHAT'S HAPPENING DOWN THERE, BUT STARTING ON THE NORTH CAROLINA COAST, POWER GRIDS HAVE GONE DOWN, AND THE BLACKOUT IS MOVING WEST.
THE CALIFORNIA COAST IS WHERE I WAS ABLE TO GET THE MOST INFORMATION BECAUSE NETWORKS ARE STILL UP. THE POET IS THERE, AND HER POWER IS A KIND OF ROMANTIC COMPULSION. HER POETRY MAKES PEOPLE WORSHIP AND ADORE HER, AND DO ANYTHING SHE SAYS--SHE USES THEM AGAINST EACH OTHER FOR HER OWN AMUSEMENT. SHE'S MOVING NORTH,TOWARD SAN FRANCISCO.
ALL IN ALL, I THINK THE HORSEMEN ARE MOVING IN A CLOCKWORK STORM AROUND THE COUNTRY, EACH LEAVING THEIR OWN BRAND OF HELL IN THEIR WAKE BEFORE THE NEXT HORSEMAN ARRIVES WITH A DIFFERENT BRAND OF DEATH AND DESTRUCTION.
SWIP
POWER GIRL, DID YOU GET ALL THAT?

...PAIGE? ARE YOU OKAY?
PANT
PANT
I CAN SENSE YOU ON THE OTHER END OF OUR CONNECTION. I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME, POWER GIRL.
BOOM
...POWER GIRL? HELLO?
SHAZZX
POWER GIRL.
PANT
PANT
CLENCH
POWER GIRL.
PAIGE.
THAK

YOU SEEM TROUBLED, SWEET GIRL.
FLIP
TELL ME ABOUT THOSE TROUBLES.
I'M *INTIMATELY* ACQUAINTED WITH SORROWS.
...WHERE ARE WE?
A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN NO LONGER ABUSE MY POOR HENCHMEN.
I'M A MUCH MORE ALLURING TARGET TO EXORCISE YOUR DEVILS UPON, ANYWAY.

KRAK
IF YOU INSIST.
LET ME GUESS--YOU WON'T TURN INTANGIBLE BECAUSE THEN YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO TOUCH ME. WHAT A CONUNDRUM.
UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, TOUCH WORKS BOTH WAYS.
I COULD HEAR YOU.
IN THE SUBTLE REALMS.
WHAT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
FOR A TIME, I COULD HEAR ALL YOUR PAIN AND LONELINESS. IT WAS SO POTENT THAT IT REVERBERATED EVEN SO FAR AS THE SUBTLE REALMS, CARRYING OVER AS A WHISPER.
THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE.
SWEET, SAD GIRL... YOU THINK YOU DON'T BELONG HERE.
YOU THINK YOU DON'T BELONG ANYWHERE.

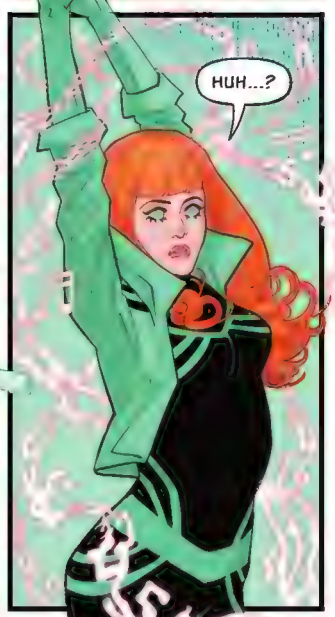
SO? WHAT'S IT TO YOU?
EVERYTHING.
IT IS EVERYTHING TO ME, DARLING GIRL.
I HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED MY OWN ANGUISH MIRRORED IN A MANNER SO AGONIZINGLY PRISTINE...
...UNTIL YOU.
I TUNED IN TO YOU EVERY DAY, UNTIL ONE DAY SOMETHING CHANGED. I COULD HEAR YOU NO LONGER. DREADFUL SILENCE, IN AN INSTANT.
YOU WERE MY TETHER. MY ANCHOR. WHEN I LOST ACCESS TO YOU, I BEGAN ATTEMPTING TO TUNNEL FORWARD INTO EARTH-PRIME THROUGH THE MINDS OF PEOPLE AROUND YOU.
I WAS CASTING MY PRESENCE OUT LIKE PSYCHIC PAPPUS SEEDS DRIFTING HOPEFUL IN THE WIND, AND PRAYING ENOUGH OF ME COULD TAKE ROOT UNTIL I WAS ABLE TO GROW FORWARD THROUGH THEM LIKE A GHOST IN THE MACHINE.
WHICH, I DID.
GET--
IT WAS ALL FOR YOU.
--OUT OF HER HEAD!

YOU AND I ARE THE SAME, POWER GIRL...
THE HELL SHE IS!
GASP!

HEY. YOU WEREN'T ANSWERING ME THROUGH OUR CONNECTION, SO I CAME TO CHECK ON YOU.
SEE THAT, JOHNNY? SOMEONE CAME FOR ME.
UNLIKE YOU, I'M NOT ACTUALLY ALONE. WHO'S GONNA COME FOR YOU?
YOU'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO HOLD US UNDER YOUR THRALL. WE'RE GOING TO BEAT YOU. BECAUSE JUST LIKE ME, OMEN IS IMMUNE TO YOUR ILLUSIONS.

PERHAPS, BUT...UNLIKE YOU, SHE'S ONLY HUMAN.

THUS...NOT IMMUNE TO THE INFLUENCE OF MY HORSEMAN'S MUSIC.

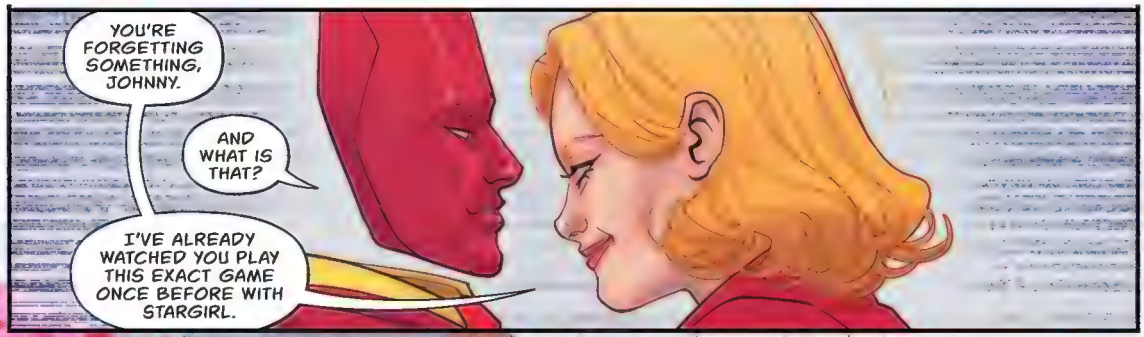

HUH...?

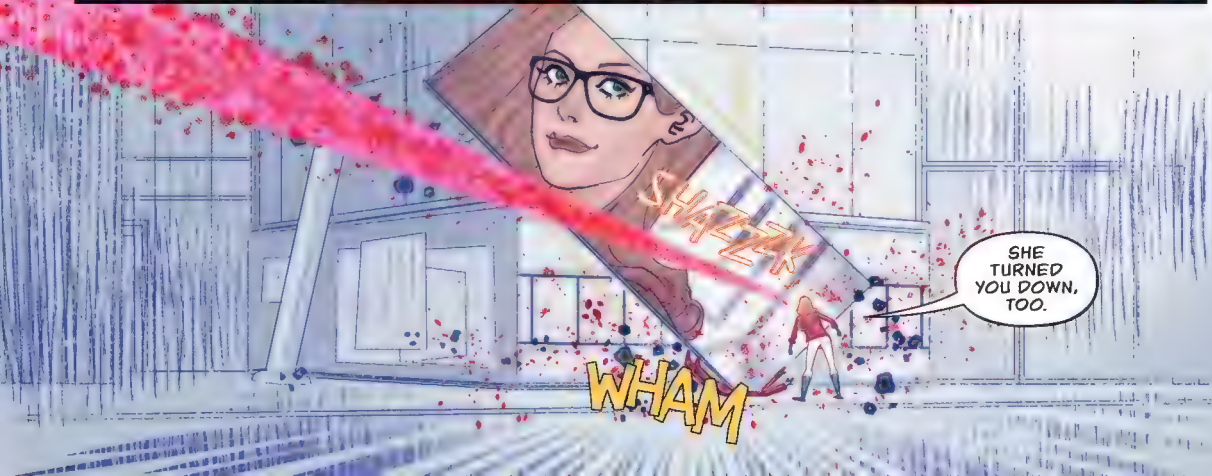
NO NONONO NO--
PEOPLE TEND TO THINK OF HATRED AS LOVE'S OPPOSITE
NO!
BUT I DISAGREE - I THINK HATRED IS JUST LOVE'S SHARPENED EDGE
AAGH!
IT'S THE SAME PASSION, THE SAME POTENCY, THE SAME INTENSITY JUST A DIFFERENT FLAVOR
LILITH, PLEASE COME BACK. I CAN'T DO THIS WITHOUT YOU!
LET HER GO!
SO NO. HATRED ISN'T LOVE'S OPPOSITE
ARGHHH!
SHAZZK
GRIEF IS

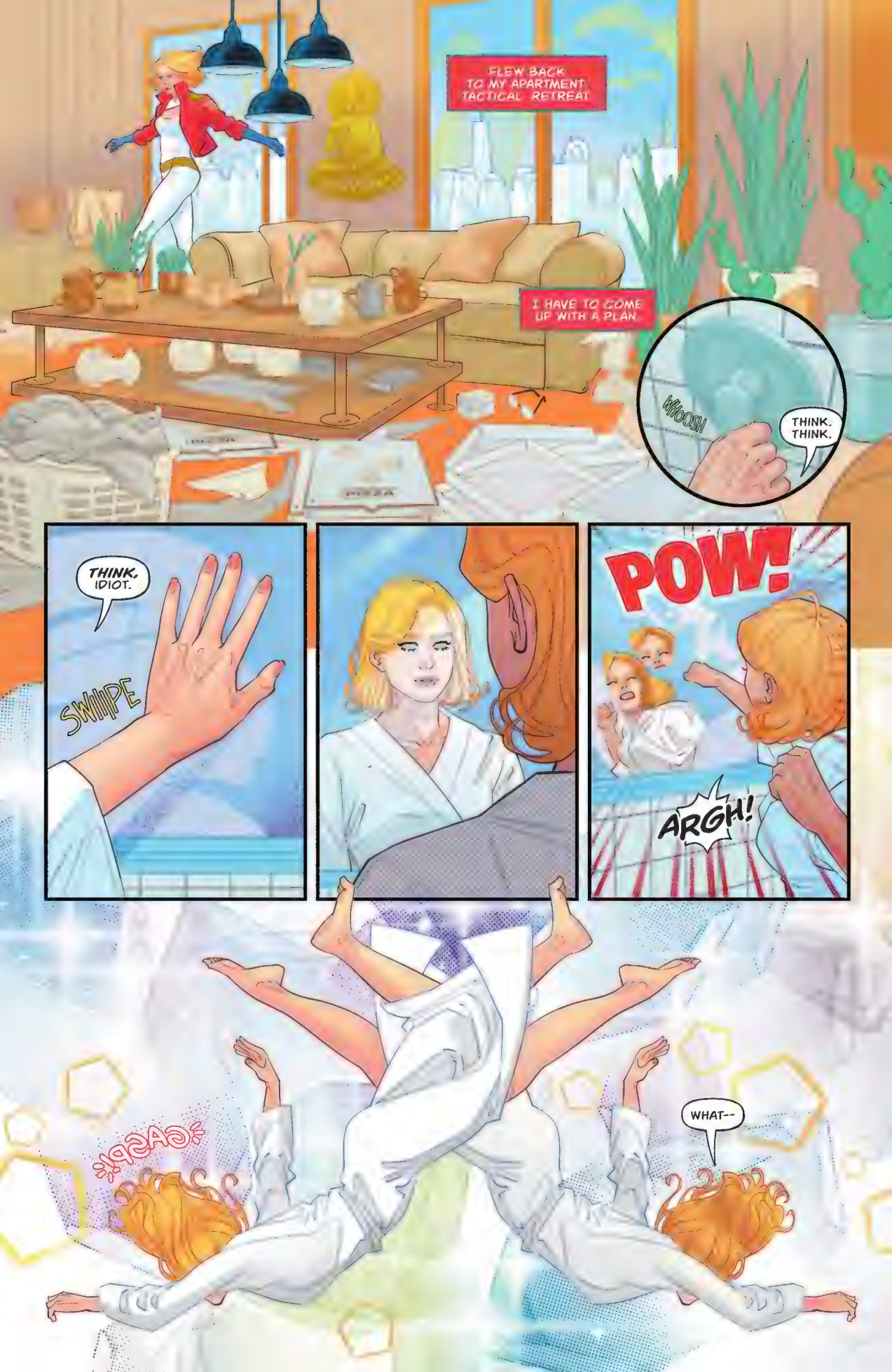
NO...
YOU CAN SAVE THEM. YOU CAN SAVE THEM ALL.

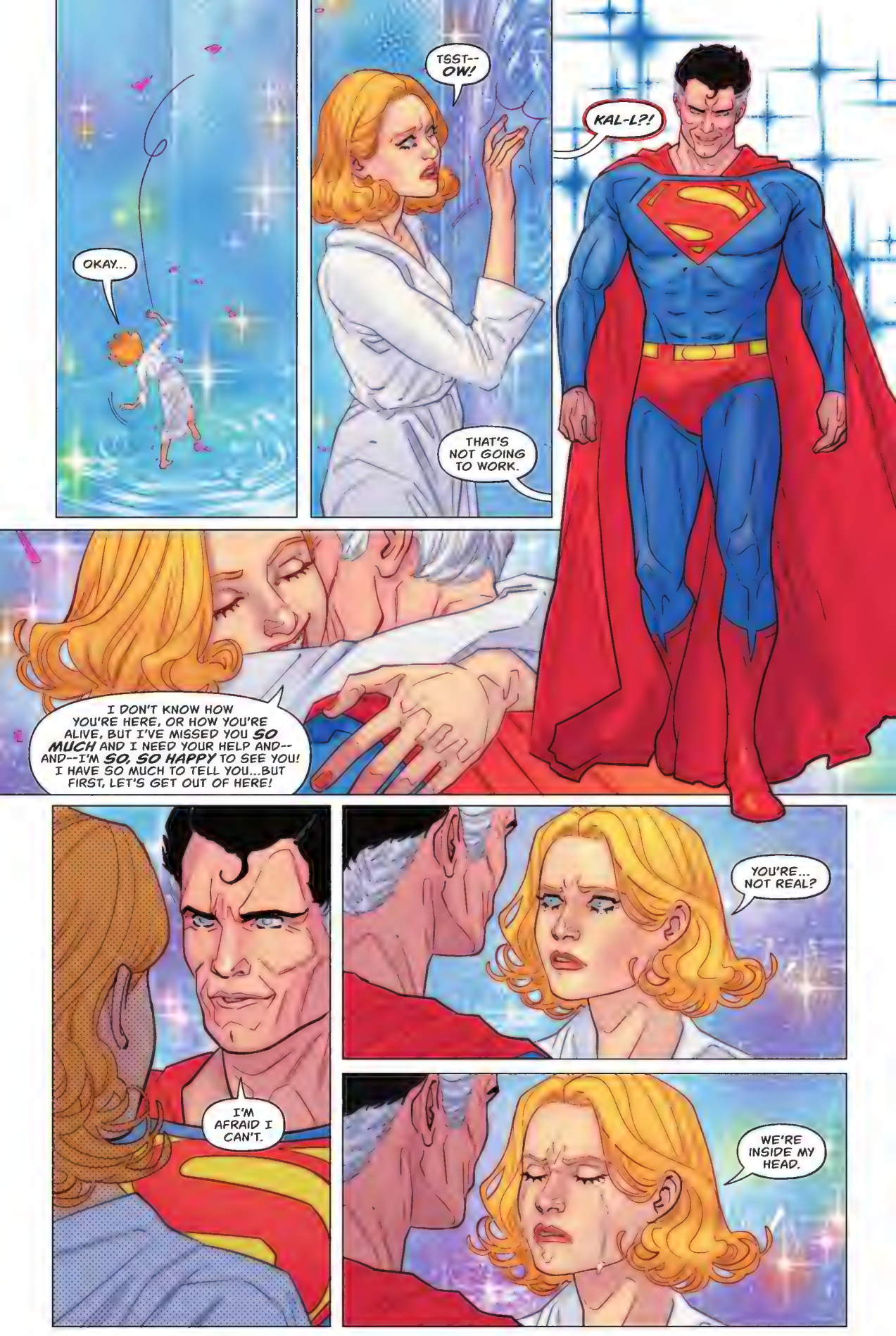
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS COME BACK WITH ME TO EARTH-2.

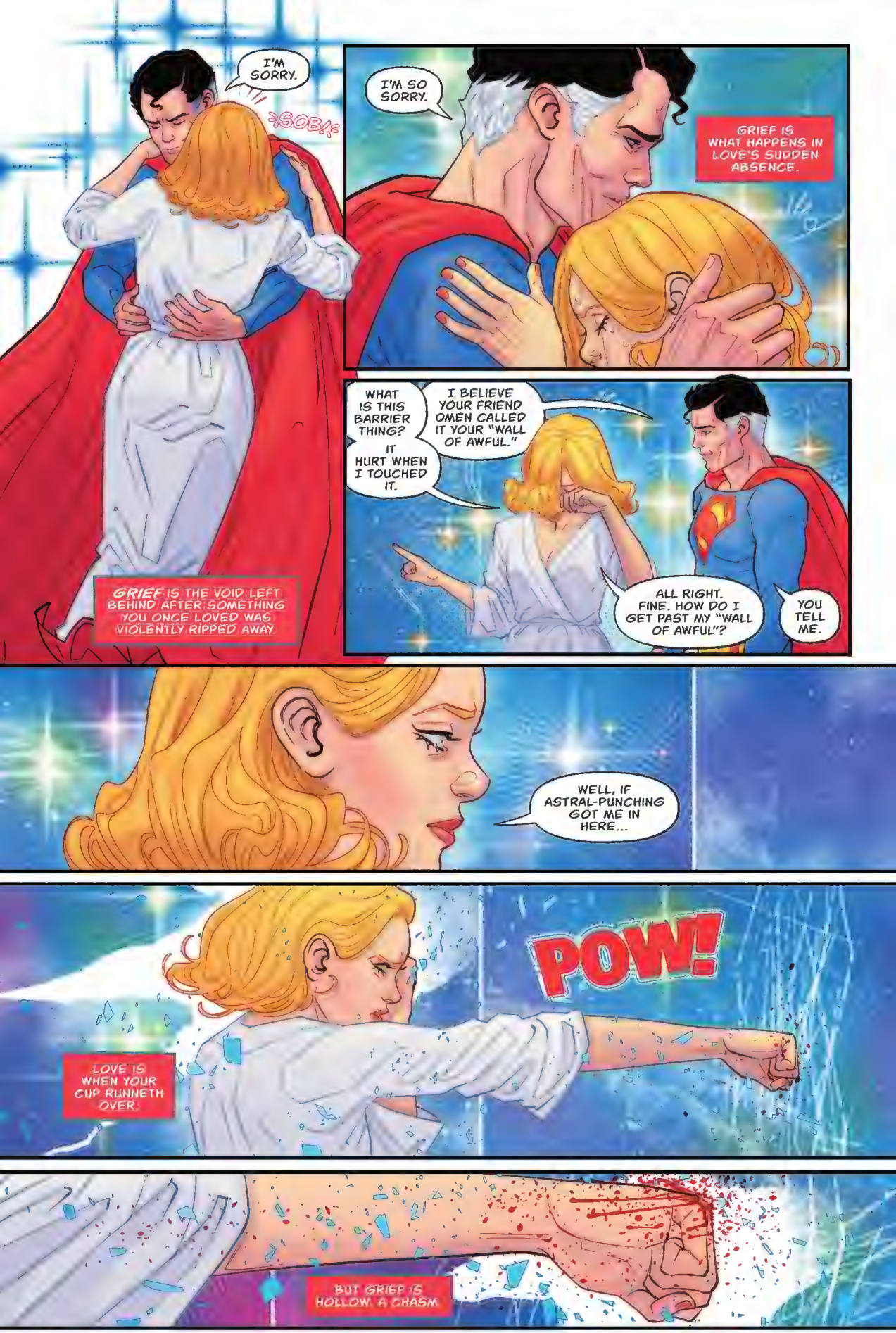
WE'RE DESTINED, SWEET GIRL. YOU AND I, DEAR PAIGE ARE THE LAST TWO REMAINING SURVIVORS OF A FALLEN WORLD.
RETURN WITH ME TO EARTH-2 AND WE'LL BE AN ADAM AND EVE, IN REVERSE. REPAIRING OUR LOST WORLD.
ONCE I LEAVE EARTH-PRIME, MY HORSEMEN AND HENCHMEN ALIKE WILL FOLLOW. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO... TO SAVE EVERY-ONE...IS SIMPLY SAY YES.


YOU'RE FORGETTING SOMETHING, JOHNNY.
AND WHAT IS THAT?
I'VE ALREADY WATCHED YOU PLAY THIS EXACT GAME ONCE BEFORE WITH STARGIRL.

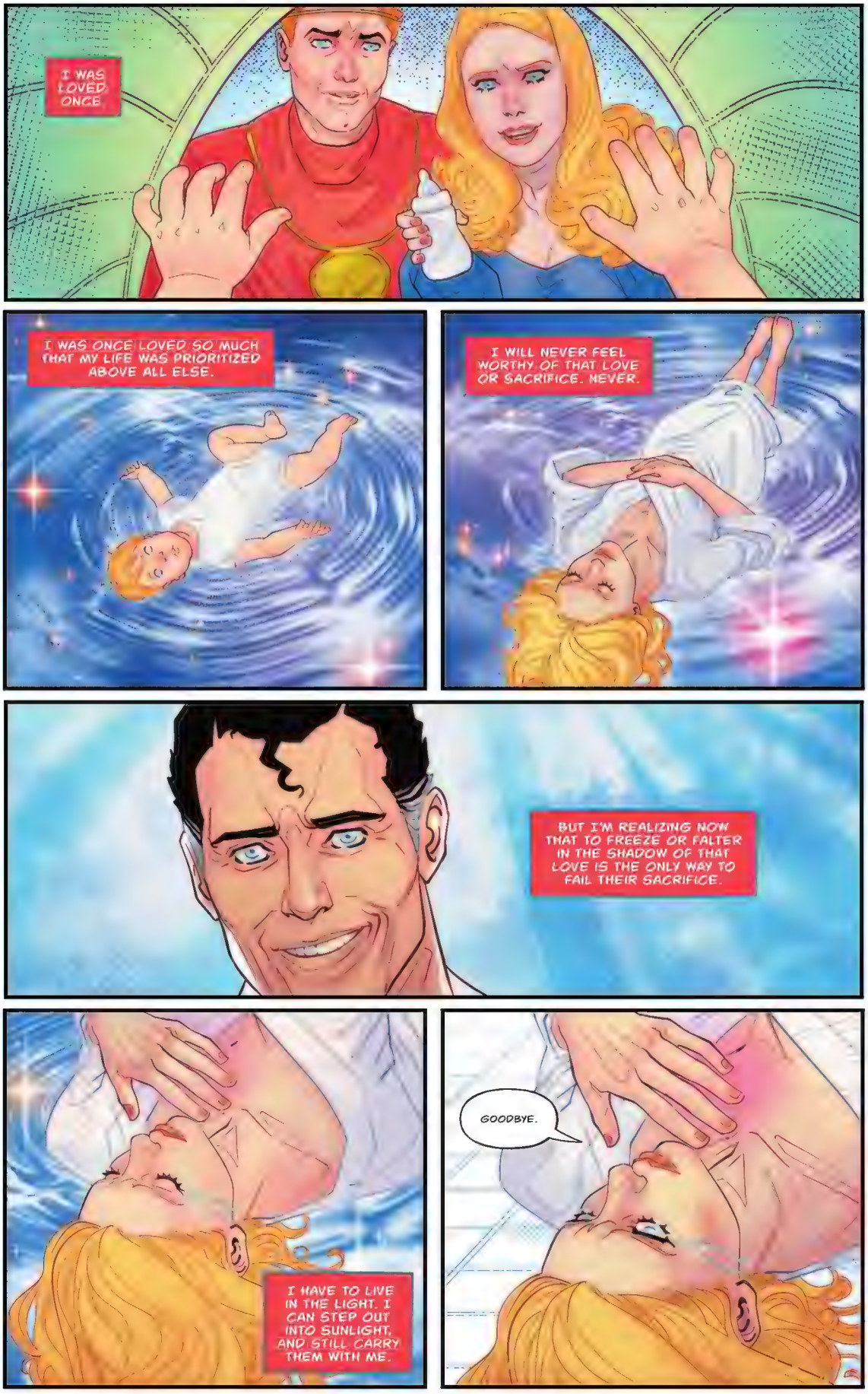

SHAZZAK
WHAM
SHE TURNED YOU DOWN, TOO.


FLEW BACK TO MY APARTMENT TACTICAL RETREAT
I HAVE TO COME UP WITH A PLAN.
WHOOSH
THINK. THINK.
THINK. IDIOT.
SWIPE
POW!
ARGH!
WHAT--
GASP!


OKAY...
TSST-- OW!
THAT'S NOT GOING TO WORK.
KAL-L?!
I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU'RE HERE, OR HOW YOU'RE ALIVE, BUT I'VE MISSED YOU SO MUCH AND I NEED YOUR HELP AND-- AND--I'M SO, SO HAPPY TO SEE YOU! I HAVE SO MUCH TO TELL YOU...BUT FIRST, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
I'M AFRAID I CAN'T.
YOU'RE... NOT REAL?
WE'RE INSIDE MY HEAD.


I'M SORRY.
>SOB!<
GRIEF IS THE VOID LEFT BEHIND AFTER SOMETHING YOU ONCE LOVED WAS VIOLENTLY RIPPED AWAY.
I'M SO SORRY.
GRIEF IS WHAT HAPPENS IN LOVE'S SUDDEN ABSENCE.
WHAT IS THIS BARRIER THING?
IT HURT WHEN I TOUCHED IT.
I BELIEVE YOUR FRIEND OMEN CALLED IT YOUR "WALL OF AWFUL."
ALL RIGHT. FINE. HOW DO I GET PAST MY "WALL OF AWFUL"?
YOU TELL ME.
WELL, IF ASTRAL-PUNCHING GOT ME IN HERE...
POW!
LOVE IS WHEN YOUR CUP RUNNETH OVER.
BUT GRIEF IS HOLLOW. A CHASM

THERE IS NO NEGOTIATING WITH GRIEF. IT DOES WHAT IT WANTS TO YOU, WHEN IT WANTS.
YOU WILL NEVER OUTGROW OR OUTRUN IT.
POW!
BUT
YOU CAN FIND WAYS TO GROW AROUND IT.
I NEVER GOT TO SAY GOODBYE


I WAS LOVED ONCE
I WAS ONCE LOVED SO MUCH THAT MY LIFE WAS PRIORITIZED ABOVE ALL ELSE.
I WILL NEVER FEEL WORTHY OF THAT LOVE OR SACRIFICE. NEVER.
BUT I'M REALIZING NOW THAT TO FREEZE OR FALTER IN THE SHADOW OF THAT LOVE IS THE ONLY WAY TO FAIL THEIR SACRIFICE.
I HAVE TO LIVE IN THE LIGHT. I CAN STEP OUT INTO SUNLIGHT, AND STILL CARRY THEM WITH ME.
GOODBYE.

ELSEWHERE
N-NO, PLEASE! STOP! N-NO!
POW!
I UNMADE THE PENDULUM FIRST.
THEN I CAME FOR THE POET.
POW!

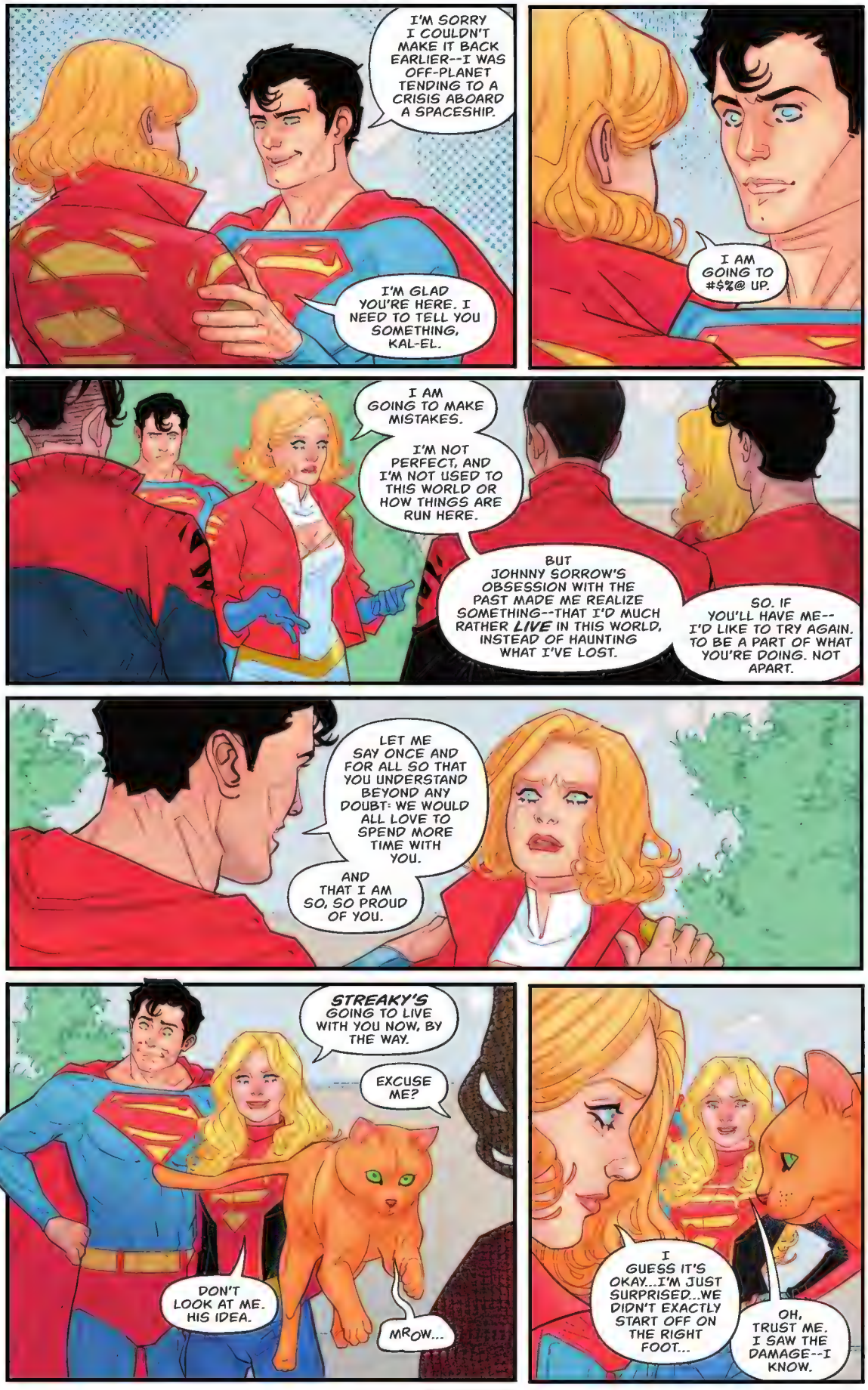
WEAK. SOFT. HUMANS.
SHH
CRAK
SWATCH
MIGHT I BE THE FIRST TO SAY...
...WELCOME TO GOTHAM.
YANK
NOW GET THE HELL OUT.
CATWOMAN TOOK CARE OF THE PIT ON HER OWN.

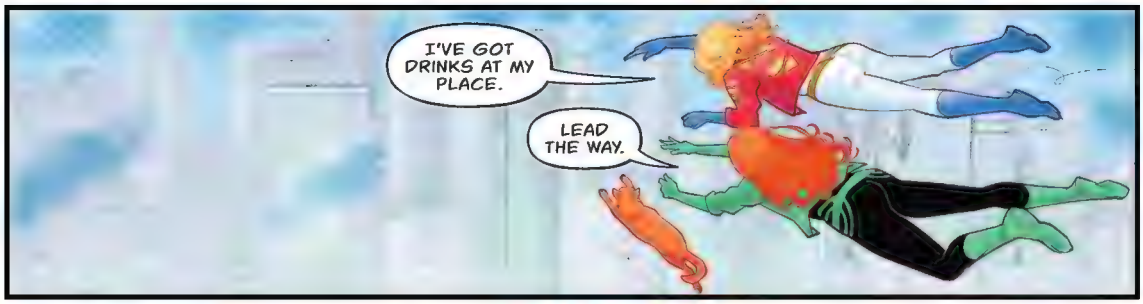
GASP!
POW!
WAKEY, WAKEY, BESTIE.
IT'S THE ASTRAL PUNCHING THAT WAS THE TRICK—IT BREAKS ILLUSIONS
THE HORSEMEN WERE AN ALTERNATE REALITY I COULD SHATTER THROUGH
I GOTTA GO TAKE CARE OF JOHNNY. THINK YOU CAN HANDLE IT FROM HERE?
HAPPILY.
FIRST, OMEN TELEPATHICALLY DEACTIVATED SOUND RECEPTORS IN EVERY SINGLE BRAIN OF THE CROWD TRAPPED WITHIN THE POET'S MUSICAL THRALL
AND THEN, OMEN TELEPATHICALLY DEACTIVATED THE POET
GET--
--GONE.

THE WASHOE THEATER IN ANACONDA, MONTANA. ONE OF THE LAST REMAINING ART DECO THEATERS IN THE U.S. AND WHERE JOHNNY BROUGHT US IN HIS EARLIER PSYCHIC PROJECTION.
I COULDN'T MAKE THE TRANSITION TO TALKIES BECAUSE MY ACCENT WAS TOO LOW-CLASS. THE INDUSTRY, THE ART FORM I'D DEVOTED MY LIFE TO... DISCARDED ME, JUST LIKE THAT.
YET I'D SACRIFICE EVERYTHING JUST TO FACE THAT SAME REJECTION AGAIN.
THERE'S NO ART IN THE SUBTLE REALMS. NO JOY. ONLY ARTIFICE AND MANIPULATION. ONLY THE BRUTAL EDGE OF CHAOS, THE KEENING OF THE UNIVERSE'S MOST UNWANTED CASTOFFS.
I THOUGHT THAT IF I GOT OUT, THAT IF I FORCED ROOTS DOWN, FORGED A REAL CONNECTION TO SOMEONE, SOMEWHERE ELSE...
THAT YOU COULD BELONG.
YES. I...HAVE ALWAYS LONGED FOR BELONGING.
YOU'RE SWEET.
I'M REALLY NOT.
POW!

THE NEXT DAY
HEY, UH-- SURPRISE! WE HAVE GUESTS!
YOU'RE BACK! C'MERE, CUZ--I THINK SOME INTRODUCTIONS ARE NECESSARY.
OH %$#.
THIS IS KENAN, I DON'T THINK YOU'VE OFFICIALLY MET YET.
OH, AND THESE ARE THE TWINS, OSUL-RA AND OTHO-RA.
HELLO...
OOF! UM, KARA--
SHUT UP.
JUST SHUT UP. ACCEPT THAT YOU ARE LOVED.
...OKAY.
LOOKS LIKE I MISSED QUITE THE ADVENTURE.

LUCKILY FOR US, POWER GIRL AND OMEN WERE UP TO THE TASK.


I'M SORRY I COULDN'T MAKE IT BACK EARLIER--I WAS OFF-PLANET TENDING TO A CRISIS ABOARD A SPACESHIP.
I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE. I NEED TO TELL YOU SOMETHING, KAL-EL.
I AM GOING TO #$%@ UP.
I AM GOING TO MAKE MISTAKES.
I'M NOT PERFECT, AND I'M NOT USED TO THIS WORLD OR HOW THINGS ARE RUN HERE.
BUT JOHNNY SORROW'S OBSESSION WITH THE PAST MADE ME REALIZE SOMETHING--THAT I'D MUCH RATHER LIVE IN THIS WORLD, INSTEAD OF HAUNTING WHAT I'VE LOST.
SO. IF YOU'LL HAVE ME-- I'D LIKE TO TRY AGAIN. TO BE A PART OF WHAT YOU'RE DOING. NOT APART.
LET ME SAY ONCE AND FOR ALL SO THAT YOU UNDERSTAND BEYOND ANY DOUBT: WE WOULD ALL LOVE TO SPEND MORE TIME WITH YOU.
AND THAT I AM SO, SO PROUD OF YOU.
STREAKY'S GOING TO LIVE WITH YOU NOW, BY THE WAY.
EXCUSE ME?
DON'T LOOK AT ME. HIS IDEA.
MROW...
I GUESS IT'S OKAY...I'M JUST SURPRISED...WE DIDN'T EXACTLY START OFF ON THE RIGHT FOOT...
OH, TRUST ME. I SAW THE DAMAGE--I KNOW.


I'VE GOT DRINKS AT MY PLACE.
LEAD THE WAY.

SO. YOU SEVERED OUR PSYCHIC CONNECTION.
NOT INTENTIONALLY-- I DIDN'T WANT TO, BUT I HAD TO.

THE WHOLE REASON I HAD ANY PSYCHIC ABILITY IN THE FIRST PLACE WAS BECAUSE I HAD TAKEN A PIECE OF THE ASTRAL PLANE INTO ME DURING THE LAZARUS RAINS.
IN ORDER TO SEND JOHNNY BACK TO THE SUBTLE REALMS THOUGH, I HAD TO TAKE OUT THAT ENERGY AND ASTRAL-PUNCH HIM WITH IT.
WELL, I'LL MISS HAVING YOU ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT LINE.
...ME TOO.

OH, PAIGE. DON'T BE SAD--I'M STILL YOUR BEST FRIEND, PSYCHIC CONNECTION OR NO!
YOU REALLY ARE. THANK YOU, OMEN. FOR EVERYTHING.

HEY, SO DO YOU %$#@ IN A BOX, OR WHAT?
HA HA HA HA

COULDN'T SLEEP. IT'S TOO QUIET INSIDE MY HEAD NOW WITHOUT THE CONSTANT PSYCHIC RACKET BARRELING ITS WAY THROUGH MY BRAIN
Z Z Z
AND THERE'S STILL ONE THING BOTHERING ME
I KNOW THE TELEPATHY CAME FROM THE PIECE OF THE ASTRAL PLANE I CARRIED INSIDE ME. BUT WHENEVER I ASTRAL PUNCHED, IT NEVER CAME FROM MY HEAD.

DARK KNIGHT OF THE SOUL

WRITER LEAH WILLIAMS
ARTIST AND COVER ARTIST MARGUERITE SAUVAGE
COLORISTS MARGUERITE SAUVAGE AND MARISSA LOUISE
VARIANT COVERS AMANDA CONNER & JIMMY PALMIOTTI; STANLEY "ARTGERM" LAU; TULA LOTAY, DAVID NAKAYAMA, AND TAJ TENFOLD
LETTERER BECCA CAREY
ASSISTANT EDITOR JILLIAN GRANT
EDITOR BRITTANY HOLZHERR
GROUP EDITOR PAUL KAMINSKI

SUPERMAN CREATED BY JERRY SIEGEL AND JOE SHUSTER
SUPERBOY CREATED BY JERRY SIEGEL
SUPERGIRL BASED ON THE CHARACTERS CREATED BY JERRY SIEGEL AND JOE SHUSTER, BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH THE JERRY SIEGEL FAMILY

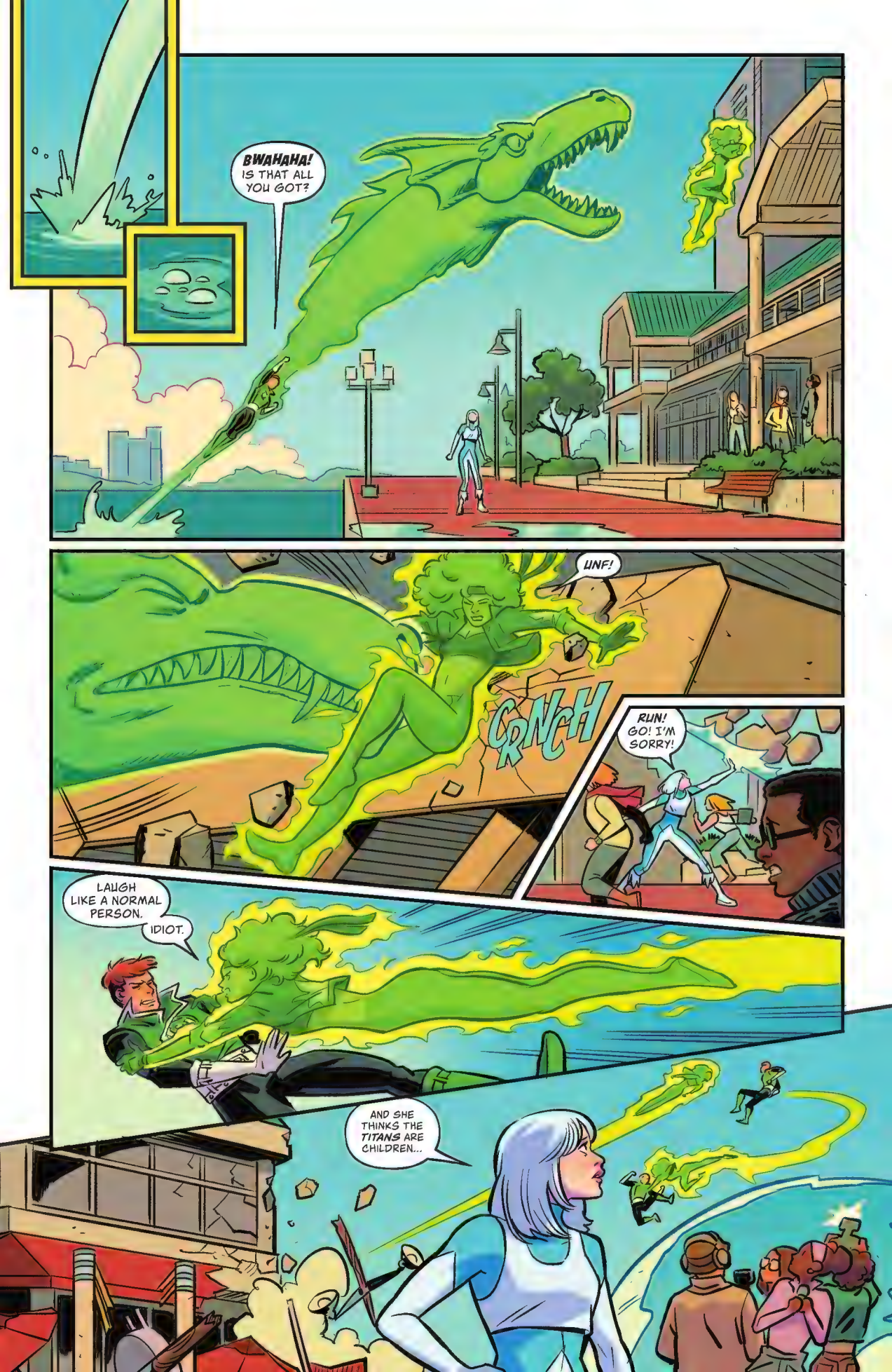
BALTIMORE.
I CAN'T BELIEVE A TEAM OF CHILDREN SENT US ON NATURAL DISASTER DUTY. WE DON'T EVEN GET TO FIGHT ANYONE.
I THINK IT'S KIND OF NICE-- BEING CLOSE TO HOME, HELPING REAL PEOPLE WITH REAL PROBLEMS.
SUPERMAN TENDS TO NATURAL DISASTERS ALL THE TIME. MAYBE IT'S WHAT HELPS HIM STAY SO...HUMAN.
I GOT YOU.
WHOAAA...
EVERYBODY BACK!
THE TITANS ARE PROBABLY OFF FIGHTING A GIANT ALIEN SQUID OR SOMETHING.
AND WE'RE HERE. IN...UGH... BALTIMORE.
GUY IS FROM BALTIMORE...
OH NO. OH NO NO NO. DON'T YOU EVEN THINK ABOUT CALLING HIM.
WHAT? THESE PEOPLE COULD BE HIS FRIENDS.

FIRE & ICE in... HOT WATER
JOANNE STARER script
NATACHA BUSTOS art
GUY GARDNER DOESN'T HAVE FRIENDS.
I'M HIS FRIEND.
AND I'M YOUR FRIEND, WHICH IS WHY I'M TELLING YOU...DON'T CALL. THIS IS BASICALLY YOUR VERSION OF DRUNK DIALING.
YOU'RE BEING RIDICULOUS.
TAMRA BONVILLAIN colors ARIANA MAHER letters ANDREA SHEA edits
AM I? REMEMBER LAST MONTH IN PERU WHEN YOU SAID, "A GIANT BOXING GLOVE SURE WOULD BE HELPFUL RIGHT NOW"? OR--
I DON'T NEED YOU TO PROTECT ME, BEA.
BUT I DO. BECAUSE I LOVE YOU.
BEEP
I LOVE YOU TOO.
BUT I NEED TO MAKE MY OWN CHOICES.

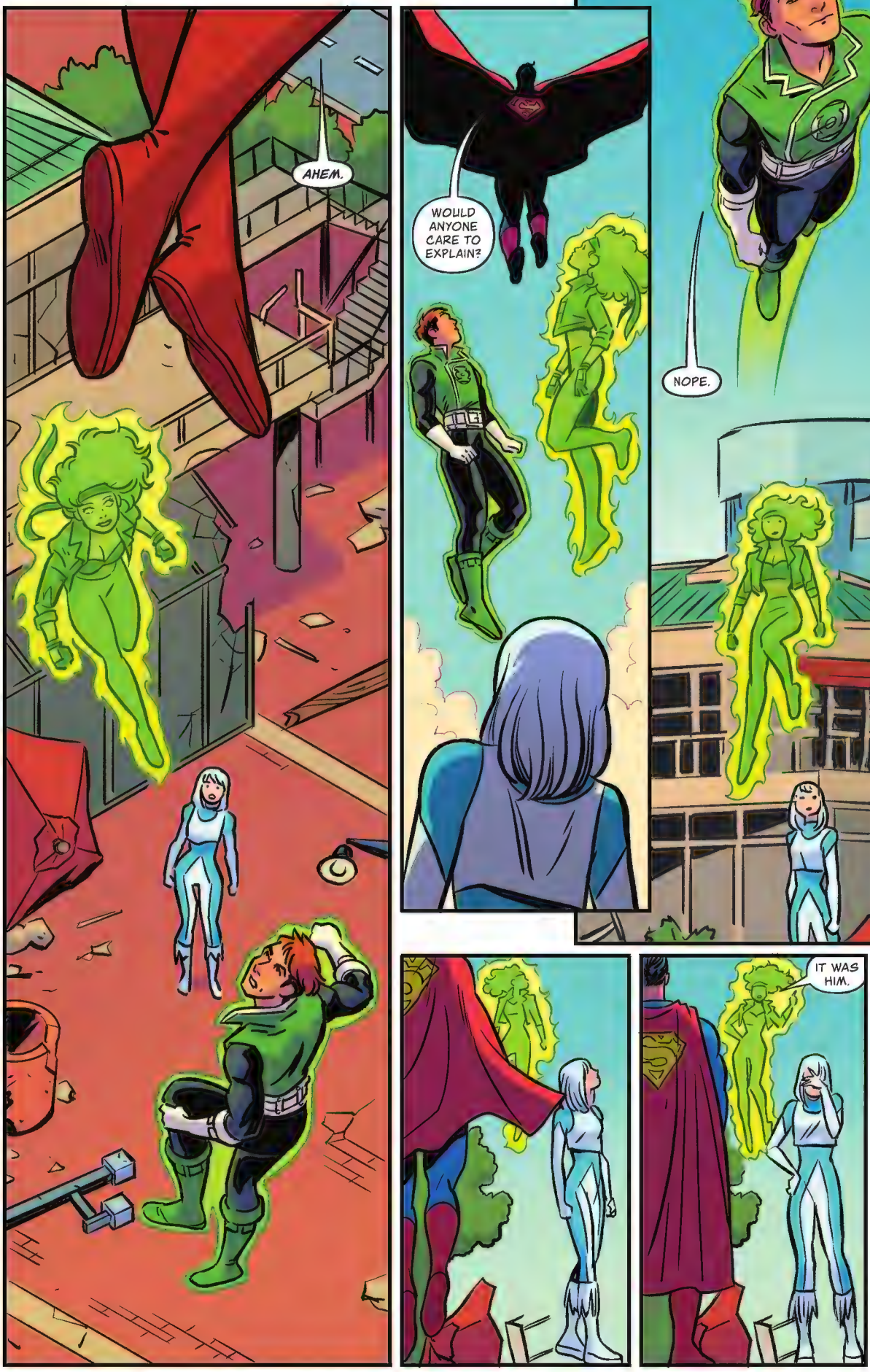
THE WAVES ARE LETTING UP!
I JUST HAVE TO EVAPORATE THE REST OF THE FLOOD WATERS AND WE CAN GET OUTTA HERE.
ICE! TELL US WHAT HAPPENED HERE!
IS IT TRUE FIRE HAD A STEAMY AFFAIR WITH BRUCE WAYNE?
WHAT?! NO! EVERYONE GET BACK!
RELAAAX, TOOTS...
..THEY'RE WITH ME.
WHEN GUY GARDNER COMES DOWN FROM THE HEAVENS, IT'S BIG NEWS.*
NOW, C'MON. LET THEM SEE THAT PRETTY FACE.
*THIS STORY TAKES PLACE BEFORE GREEN LANTERN #1 --ANDREA

MISS ME?
IN CASE YOU HADN'T NOTICED--
--WE'RE WORKING.
AWW, YOU GIRLS NEED SOME HELP CLEANING UP THIS MESS?
EASY PEASY.
GUY, NO! YOU'RE GONNA--
CRRKKK
UNGH!
HELP!

TORA!
YOU COULD HAVE KILLED HER!
I'M OKAY...IT'S OKAY...
OH RE-LAX. I WOULD NEVER HURT HER.
ALL YOU DO IS HURT HER!
C'MON. BABE. YOU GONNA LISTEN TO THIS NONSENSE?
I KNOW YOU DIDN'T MEAN IT, BUT...
REALLY? BUT?! BUT WHAT?!
BUT WE HAD IT UNDER CONTROL...
...AND YOUR SHOWBOATING PUT EVERYONE IN DANGER!
BEA! DON'T!


BWAHAHA! IS THAT ALL YOU GOT?
UNF!
CRNCH
RUN! GO! I'M SORRY!
LAUGH LIKE A NORMAL PERSON.
IDIOT.
AND SHE THINKS THE TITANS ARE CHILDREN...

PLEASE, STOP!
BOTH OF YOU!
SHE STARTED IT!
YEAH, AND I'M GONNA FINISH IT!
THEY'RE GOING TO DESTROY THE CITY!
AREN'T YOU GOING TO STOP THEM?
HOW? I...I TRIED, I--


AHEM.
WOULD ANYONE CARE TO EXPLAIN?
NOPE.
IT WAS HIM.

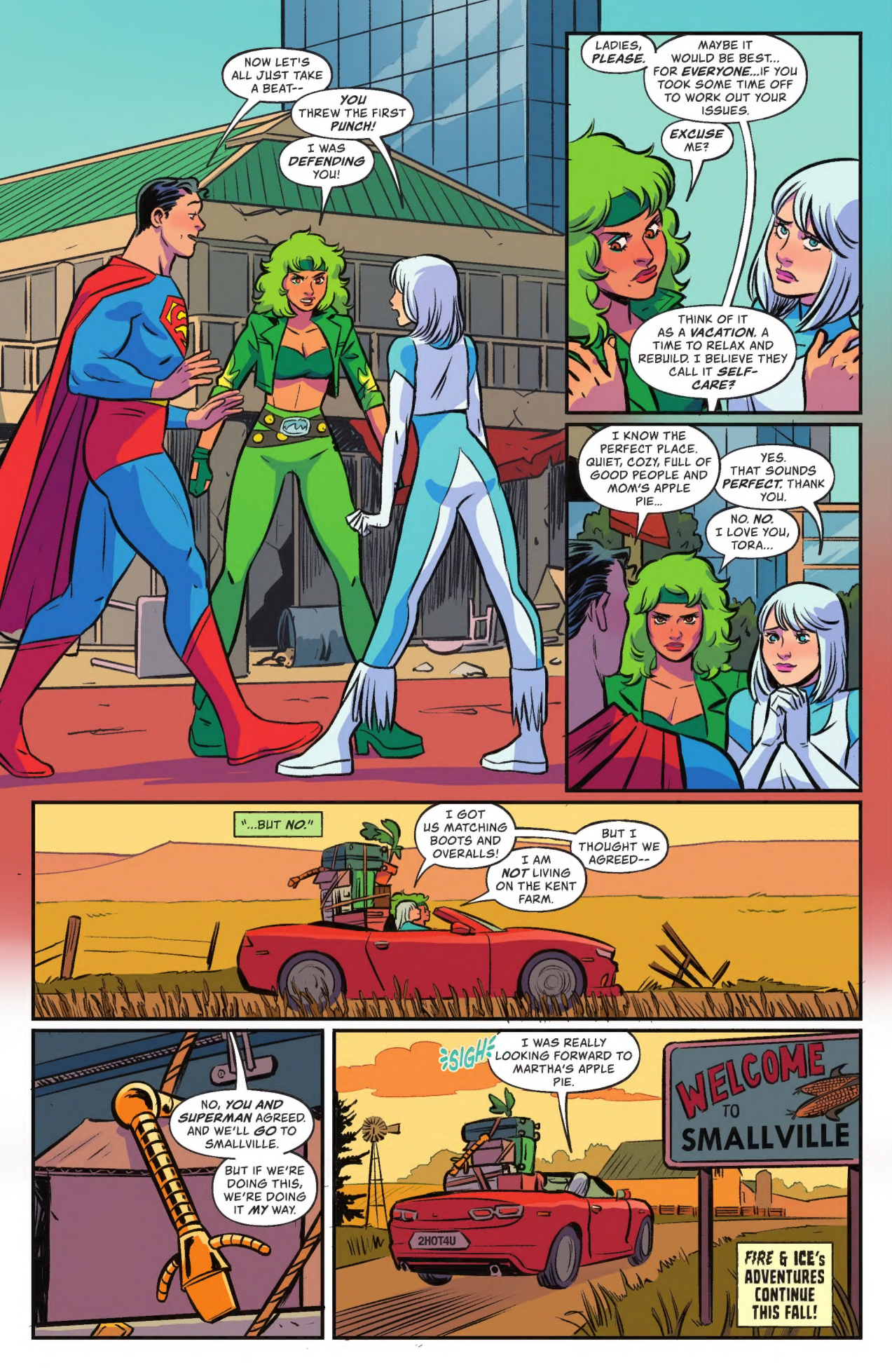
OH GOSH, I FORGOT HOW TALL YOU ARE!
GOOD TO SEE YOU TOO, ICE.
LET ME GUESS. YOU'RE NOT MAD...YOU'RE JUST DISAPPOINTED.
FIRE, I'M NOT YOUR FATHER. I DIDN'T COME HERE TO PUNISH YOU. I CAME TO HELP.
WE DIDN'T ASK FOR HELP. NOT FROM HIM, AND NOT FROM YOU.

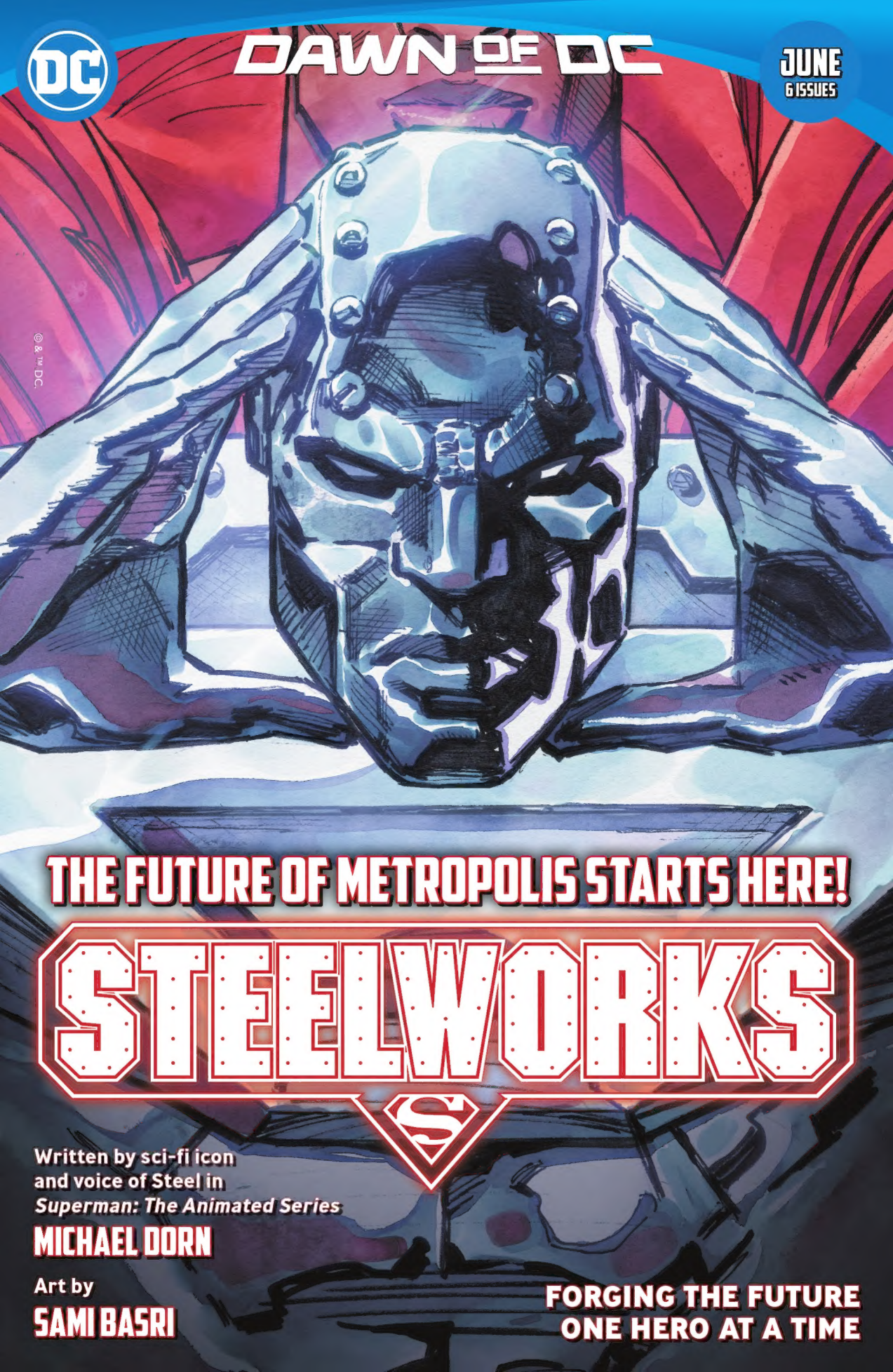
I KNOW IT CAN BE HARD TO ACCEPT ASSISTANCE, TO SAY YOU CAN'T DO IT ALONE.
BUT YOU PUT THEM ALL IN DANGER. IS YOUR EGO MORE IMPORTANT THAN THEIR LIVES?

WE HAVE TO BE ABOVE THAT. BECAUSE WE'RE NOT JUST HEROES. WE'RE SYMBOLS.
CLINK

IS THAT...YOUR OLD JUSTICE LEAGUE COMMUNICATOR...?

I KNEW YOU COULDN'T STOP YOURSELF FROM CALLING HIM--!
YOU CAN'T TELL ME WHO TO TALK TO, BEA--
WHATEVER! YOU BROUGHT GUY HERE, BUT I'M GOING TO GET BLAMED FOR THIS MESS!


NOW LET'S ALL JUST TAKE A BEAT--
YOU THREW THE FIRST PUNCH!
I WAS DEFENDING YOU!
LADIES, PLEASE.
MAYBE IT WOULD BE BEST... FOR EVERYONE...IF YOU TOOK SOME TIME OFF TO WORK OUT YOUR ISSUES.
EXCUSE ME?
THINK OF IT AS A VACATION. A TIME TO RELAX AND REBUILD. I BELIEVE THEY CALL IT SELF-CARE?
I KNOW THE PERFECT PLACE. QUIET, COZY, FULL OF GOOD PEOPLE AND MOM'S APPLE PIE...
YES. THAT SOUNDS PERFECT. THANK YOU.
NO. NO. I LOVE YOU, TORA...
"...BUT NO."
I GOT US MATCHING BOOTS AND OVERALLS!
BUT I THOUGHT WE AGREED--
I AM NOT LIVING ON THE KENT FARM.
NO, YOU AND SUPERMAN AGREED. AND WE'LL GO TO SMALLVILLE.
BUT IF WE'RE DOING THIS, WE'RE DOING IT MY WAY.
SIGH
I WAS REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO MARTHA'S APPLE PIE.
WELCOME TO SMALLVILLE
2HOT4U
FIRE & ICE's ADVENTURES CONTINUE THIS FALL!


DC
DAWN OF DC
JUNE
6 ISSUES
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THE FUTURE OF METROPOLIS STARTS HERE!
STEELWORKS
Written by sci-fi icon
and voice of Steel in
Superman: The Animated Series
MICHAEL DORN
Art by
SAMI BASRI
FORGING THE FUTURE
ONE HERO AT A TIME

DC NATION SPOTLIGHT ON

DC PRIDE 2023

DC Pride is back with its third annual anthology, featuring 104 pages of all-new stories from top-tier talent! Plus, celebrate more than 30 years of fan-favorite LGBTQIA+ characters in the DC Universe with *DC Pride: Through the Years*, and look out for DC Pride variant covers across DC's monthly comics. Here's your guide to what to look out for this June!

DC PRIDE 2023

This year's *DC Pride* anthology focuses on unique team-ups, including Tim Drake and Connor Hawke by Nadia Shammas and Bruka Jones; Apollo, Midnighter, and Green Lantern (Alan Scott) by Josh Trujillo and Don Aguillo; and Jon Kent and John Constantine by Christopher Cantwell and Skylar Patridge. Plus: Grant Morrison returns to Multiversity for a cosmic love story beautifully illustrated by Hayden Sherman!

DC PRIDE: THROUGH THE YEARS

The history of DC Pride is commemorated in this 80-page one-shot, reprinting three seminal stories: *The Flash* #53, where Pied Piper comes out to the Flash and helps him thwart a dastardly villain; *Detective Comics* #854, the start of Batwoman's solo adventures; and *Supergirl* #19, the story of a nonbinary teenager who befriends the Girl of Steel. Plus: an all-new story by Tim Sheridan and Cian Tormey starring Alan Scott, leading into his new solo series!

DC PRIDE VARIANT COVERS

All month long, look out for DC Pride variant covers throughout DC's publishing line, illustrated by amazing talent including Jessica Fong, Yoshi Yoshitani, Stephen Byrne, Amy Reeder, and more—like this *Steelworks* #1 cover by Joshua "Sway" Swaby! Find them on comics including *Superman*, *Green Arrow*, *Poison Ivy*, *Harley Quinn*, and more!

DON'T MISS THESE DC PRIDE RELEASES THROUGHOUT THE MONTH OF JUNE!

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